

## **SOUTHWEST REGION HURRICANE RITA UPDATE OF SEPTEMBER 29, 2005 – 2100 HOURS**

### **PERSONNEL STATUS:**

Number of employees unaccounted for due to this disaster: 0

Number of employees affected by this disaster: report pending

Number of employees on Administrative Leave: report pending

Number of employees assigned to the team: 69 FWS – 1 USFS

### **COOP: EMPLOYEES WORKING AT AN ALTERNATE SITE: 0**

Until further notice, Central Command briefings at 0845 and the conference calls at 0900 will continue between the Regional Office, the Incident Command Team and those Field Stations that received direct impact from the Hurricane.

Employees must make requests for assistance through the Team who will then place the request to the Hurricane Rita Dispatch Desk for coordination. All personnel support, boats, vehicles, equipment and supplies are to be requested and assigned through the system.

A Critical Stress Debriefing unit has been ordered. Employees needing immediate assistance can call a counselor at 1-800-222-0364 24-hours a day. The Employees Assistance Program for this incident will be expanded to include assistance with insurance claims.

**COSTS TO DATE:** About \$15 million in damages

### **General Updates:**

- All Houston LE offices powered up and open
- Facilities and locations of temporary housing task is complete
- Problems getting drivers to deliver trailers to sites
- Fuel shortages continue
- Memorandum to Service employees forthcoming on ways they can assist those impacted by Katrina in R-4 and Rita in R-4 and R-2
- Team Liaison Gilbert requested a helicopter flyover of impacted refuges – Lentz to follow up
- Refuge Chief Ciccone requested follow up on contract plane's completion of aerial survey

## **SOUTHWEST REGION T-3 COMMAND TEAM DAILY REPORT 9/29/05**

**PHONE LINES FOR ICP: 281-573-4513 or 4514**

**FAX WITH COVER SHEET TO: 281-573-1823**

### **T-3 Incident Action Plan (IAP) for September 29, 2005 :**

- Team is working up a "punch" list to complete tasks and close out on Sunday
- Continue opening of emergency access routes
- Provide fuel support
- Pump up additional security where needed

### **September 28 Team Report:**

- Humidity continues to increase, but temperature is anticipated to decline; FWS personnel focused on remaining hydrated and safe
- No accidents to date

- Temporary housing (trailer) sites for displaced refuge employees were secured
- Team's Community Liaison worked with Chambers County Judge to formalize request for State EOC recognition/request for FWS assistance (for FEMA compensation)
- Chambers County EOC sent letter to State EOC detailing what FWS has done at their request
- Chambers County Judge sent a similar letter to Jefferson County encouraging them to request Jefferson County and Port Arthur EOC recognition/requests for FWS assistance
- Heavy vehicle traffic continues as evacuees return home to Gulf Coast communities.

### **Texas Chenier Plain NWR Complex:**

- Expressed need for Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Unit
- Remote areas of complex yet to be assessed for damages
- Need for 16 more trailers expressed for temporary housing
- Grateful for the remarkable job the team has done and all the support received
- Powering up assessment being done for all facilities – power outages could continue for up to 30-days

### **Anahuac NWR and Anahuac, TX:**

- Anahuac NWR closed to the public and LE in place

### **Accomplishments:**

- Assessed generator and generator disconnect (remote ports) for McFaddin NWR
- Assessed damage and needs at refuge (90% complete)
- Restored fuel tanks – fully operational
- Assessed damages and cleaned visitor center
- Secured damaged window at check station
- Assessed fire center needs
- Restored access to Texas Parks and Wildlife officer's house (emergency responder)

### **McFaddin NWR and Port Arthur, TX:**

- Refuge closed to the public – LE in place
- Powering up may take several months

### **Accomplishments:**

- Briefed newly arrived maintenance staff
- Overhead door repairs ordered
- Installed generator at refuge law enforcement officer's house in Port Arthur
- Assessed generator and generator disconnect (remote ports) for McFaddin NWR
- Fifteen miles of emergency access (road clearing) completed in Port Arthur (Griffin Park neighborhood)
- 181 drive ways cleared of fallen trees (driveways need to be cleared to avoid street-parked cars blocking emergency access when residents return) as well as walkways
- Tarped three residents' roofs
- Blind man was taken to an evacuation shelter
- Water was hauled for Pepco (as part of cooperative exchange for ICT housing at McFaddin)

- Coordinated emergency access restoration with City of Port Arthur
- Reported a potential gas leak at a residence to gas company
- (Full needs assessment – not yet complete)

#### **Texas Point NWR:**

- Refuge closed to the public – LE in place
- Tanks have been identified – Coast Guard planning to tap the tank and laying out booms to catch leakage
- Texas Ecological Services Offices are conducting emergency consultation

#### **Accomplishments:**

- Team members were assigned to work at other stations

#### **Trinity River NWR:**

- Refuge partially open with fishing access at Champion Lake
- Coordinate with TPWD on potential for refuge hunt next week
- Electricity restored – AC running
- Phone service still questionable
- No flooding from levee and doesn't appear damaged

#### **Accomplishments:**

- Team members were assigned to work at other stations

#### **Law Enforcement Emergency Assistance:**

- Six additional officers, including the Regional Refuge Chief of Law Enforcement, were deputized in Chambers County
- LE staff moved camp from Anahuac to Motel 6 in Baytown
- Law Enforcement Officers continue to provide for team security needs and assist Texas DPS and local law enforcement agencies
- LE assessed damage to a Sabine NWR (LA) employee's residence in Port Neches
- Provided security to FWS staff staying at Baytown Motel 6; many unlawful activities are occurring at that site

#### **Cooperators:**

- Chambers County Judge Sylvia, Mid County Commissioner Judy Edmonds and West County Commissioner have greatly assisted in providing temporary Incident Command Post locations and are facilitating team housing.
- Chambers County Sheriff assisted with camp security and Anahuac volunteer fire department provided weapons cache and housing for FWS LE.
- Cleveland and Conroe, Texas police departments provided urban escort services for FWS relocation convoy.
- Liberty County Sheriff and Texas Department of Public Safety held traffic at intersection (SR 321 & SR 101 and Moss Hill, respectively).
- Proprietor of the Wooden Spoon (Edie Woods), the only functioning restaurant in Anahuac, Texas, have been providing meals to emergency relief workers, including FWS when we are operating in the area.

**END OF REPORT**

**INFORMATION ACCESS:**

**CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS COUNSELORS CAN BE REACHED 24-HOURS AT:**

**1-800- 222-0364**

**INTERNET:**

Anyone seeking information on Hurricane Rita may do so via these Service links:

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/>    <http://www.fws.gov/>

**R-2 HURRICANE RITA EMERGENCY INFORMATION/DISPATCH DESK:**

Employees can reach the Southwest Region's Command Center's Hurricane Rita Emergency Information Desk by e-mail or text messaging at: [hurricanerita@fws.gov](mailto:hurricanerita@fws.gov)

**TELEPHONE:**

The Emergency Information and resources Dispatch Desk is being staffed at the Regional Office from 0600 to 1800 daily. The Desk is serving as a centralized communications base for all affected staff and offices.

**\*HURRICANE RITA EMERGENCY INFORMATION DESK  
PHONE NUMBER: 505-248-6508    FAX: 505-248-6475**

Employees may check for pre-recorded information on the Region's 24-Hour Emergency Phone Line at:

**\*24-Hour Employee Emergency Hotline: 505-248-6543**

**NOTE:** Any media inquiries may be coordinated by External Affairs: 505-248-6911

Daily updates will be completed by COB each day and press releases issued as necessary.

**END OF REPORT**